

**Proposed Substitute
Bill No. 6873**

LCO No. 5033

**AN ACT CONCERNING INJURED VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTERS AND
SICK LEAVE BENEFITS.**

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. Section 5-249 of the general statutes is repealed and the
2 following is substituted in lieu thereof (*Effective July 1, 2015*):

3 (a) Any state employee who is an active volunteer firefighter or
4 member of a volunteer ambulance service or company (1) may, with
5 the authorization of such employee's appointing authority, be
6 permitted to leave work in order to respond to fire calls or ambulance
7 calls during such employee's regular hours of employment without
8 loss of pay, vacation time, sick leave or earned overtime accumulation,
9 or (2) shall be permitted to respond to such calls prior to reporting for
10 work without such prior authorization and without loss of pay,
11 vacation time, sick leave or earned overtime accumulation, provided in
12 either case, if requested by such employee's appointing authority, such
13 employee submits a written statement from the chief of the volunteer
14 fire department or the medical director or chief administrator of the
15 volunteer ambulance service or company verifying that such employee
16 responded to a fire or ambulance call and specifying the date, time and
17 duration of such response.

18 (b) Any state employee who is a certified disaster service volunteer

19 of the American Red Cross may, with the authorization of such
20 employee's supervisor, be granted a leave not to exceed fifteen
21 working days in each year to participate in specialized disaster relief
22 services for the American Red Cross, upon the request of the American
23 Red Cross, without loss of pay, vacation time, sick leave or earned
24 overtime accumulation.

25 (c) Any state employee who is an active volunteer firefighter or
26 member of a volunteer ambulance service or company may, with the
27 authorization of such employee's appointing authority, be allowed to
28 attend training sessions or drills during such employee's regular hours
29 of employment without loss of pay, overtime accumulation or sick
30 leave.

31 (d) Any state employee who is an active member of a volunteer
32 canine search and rescue team (1) may, with the authorization of such
33 employee's supervisor, be permitted to leave work in order to respond
34 to search or rescue calls during such employee's regular hours of
35 employment without loss of pay, vacation time, sick leave or earned
36 overtime accumulation, or (2) shall be permitted to respond to such
37 calls prior to reporting for work without such prior authorization and
38 without loss of pay, vacation time, sick leave or earned overtime
39 accumulation, provided in either case, if requested by such employee's
40 supervisor, such employee submits a written statement from the chief
41 of the police or fire department verifying that such employee
42 responded to a search or rescue call and specifying the date, time and
43 duration of such response. As used in this subsection, "volunteer
44 canine search and rescue team" means an individual and a dog (A)
45 appropriately trained and certified to engage in search and rescue
46 operations by a nonprofit canine search and rescue organization that is
47 a member of the National Association of Search and Rescue, or its
48 successor organization, and (B) who jointly engage in such operations
49 at the request of a police or fire department and provide services
50 without compensation.

51 (e) Any state employee who is an active volunteer firefighter and is

52 injured on or after January 1, 2014, while serving in his or her capacity
53 as a volunteer firefighter, shall be permitted to collect sick leave with
54 pay for such injury pursuant to section 5-247 provided (1) such
55 employee is eligible to receive such sick leave pay pursuant to the
56 provisions of said section, (2) if requested by such employee's
57 appointing authority, such employee submits a written statement from
58 the chief of the volunteer fire department that such employee was
59 injured during a fire call and specifying the date, time and nature of
60 such injury, and (3) the amount of weekly sick leave with pay received
61 for such injury plus any weekly workers' compensation wage
62 replacement benefits received pursuant to section 7-314a or 7-314b for
63 such injury shall not exceed the weekly workers' compensation wage
64 replacement benefits such employee would have received had such
65 employee been injured in the course of his or her employment as a
66 state employee. A state employee's collection of sick leave pursuant to
67 this subsection shall not affect the seniority or accrual of pension
68 benefits of such state employee. The provisions of this subsection shall
69 not be construed to preempt or override the terms of any collective
70 bargaining agreement effective prior to July 1, 2015.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:

Section 1	<i>July 1, 2015</i>	5-249
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